

## Message Text

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43

ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 OMB-01 MC-02 EB-07 COME-00

TRSE-00 INR-07 /042 W

----- 042004

P R 072004Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8665

INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN MASS

SUBJ: GOB REQUEST FOR SURPLUS LST

1. EVENING OF APRIL 4, PRIME MINISTER BARROW CALLED ON ME AT RESIDENCE TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY GOB'S ACQUIRING SURPLUS LANDING SHIP TANK (LST). HE EXPLAINED CRAFT WOULD BE USED PRIMARILY IN CONNECTION WITH OPERATIONS OF CEMENT PLANT TO BE BUILT AT NORTHERN END OF BARBADOS BY GOB AND GUYANA BAUXITE CO. (AN AGENCY OF GOG) JOINTLY. ACCORDING TO PRESENT PLANS, PLANT WOULD EXPORT APPROXIMATELY 2,000 TONS OF CLINKER PER WEEK TO GUYANA. THEREFORE, SHALLOW DRAFT VESSEL NEEDED WHICH WOULD BE CAPABLE OF NEGOTIATING DEMERARA ESTUARY AND RIVER. SAME VESSEL COULD BE USED TO LAND HEAVY EQUIPMENT AT PLANT SITE WHILE CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY, AS WELL AS IN PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY SPACE RESEARCH CORPORATION (SRC) FOR AND ON BEHALF USG. PLANT SITE IS SAME PARISH AS US NAVY FACILITY.

2. PM FURTHER STATED THAT, THROUGH SRC, GOB HAD LOCATED LST (NO. 1582) AT NAVY SHIPYARD, BREMERTON, WASHINGTON WHICH IS SURPLUS LIST FOR DISPOSAL. HE PRESENTED ME WITH LETTER CONTAINING FORMAL REQUEST FROM GOB THAT LST BE MADE AVAILABLE TO IT. ACCORDING TO PM, A MR. DALEY (TELEPHONE: 695-1332) AT "PENTAGON" IS AWARE OF GOB INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD.

3. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT SURPLUS SHIPS OF THIS TYPE ARE  
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USUALLY STRICKEN FROM NAVAL REGISTER AND SOLD UNDER FOREIGN

MILITARY SALES(FMS) PROGRAM OR THROUGH BID PROCESS. FMS MIGHT POSE PROBLEMS SINCE, TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE, GOB IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH TRANSACTIONS. WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT SUCH VESSELS ARE OFTEN SOLD ON CONDITION THAT OVERHAUL WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY PURCHASER, USUALLY AT COST WELL IN EXCESS OF NOMINAL PURCHASE PRICE OF VESSEL.

4. AS I SEE IT, OUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST GOB IN OBTAINING VESSEL UNDER REFERENCE WOULD SERVE FOLLOWING U.S. INTERESTS:

(A) MILITARY -- FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE ON OUR PART COULD WELL HAVE EFFECT OF MODERATING DEMANDS GOB MAY MAKE WHEN OUR BASE RIGHTS CAME UP FOR RENEGOTIATION IN 1977, ESPECIALLY IF LST COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AT MODERATE OR NO COST.

(B) COMMERCIAL -- EMBASSY HAS BEEN ACTIVELY ASSISTING POTENTIAL US SUPPLIERS OF CEMENT PLANT. IN VIEW HIGH DEGREE OF PM'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN THIS MATTER, OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE LST WOULD GIVE US MANUFACTURERS AN IMPORTANT EDGE THAT MIGHT WELL PROVE DECISIVE WHEN CONTRACT IS FINALLY LET.

(C) DEVELOPMENTAL -- CEMENT PLANT IS ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECT UNDERTAKEN BY GOB (TOGETHER WITH GSG) IN RECENT YEARS. IT WOULD NOT ONLY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN AN UNDEVELOPED AND IMPOVERISHED SECTION OF ISLAND BUT WOULD GIVE AN IMPORTANT BOOST TO CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY GENERALLY AND WOULD PREVENT CONSTRUCTION DELAYS AND UNCERTAINTIES EXPERIENCED DURING PAST FEW YEARS OWING TO SHORTAGES OF CEMENT. SINCE PROJECT INVOLVES BOTH GOB AND GOG, ITS SUCCESS WOULD ENHANCE REGIONAL COOPERATION AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION.

(D) PSYCHOLOGICAL -- FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE ON OUR PART WOULD DEMONSTRATE OUR SYMPATHY WITH GOB AND REGIONAL OBJECTIVES AND ENHANCE OUR IMAGE AS HELPFUL FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR.

5. I REALIZE THAT GOB EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THIS LST INVOLVE IT WITH OUR MILITARY SALES PROGRAMS, EVEN THOUGH INTENDED USE OF VESSEL WOULD BE PURELY COMMERCIAL/DEVELOPMENTAL. BARBADOS, HAS, IN FACT, NO STANDING ARMED FORCES WHATSOEVER, ITS SOLE MEANS OF DEFENSE BEING A VOLUNTEER RESERVE REGIMENT (ITS INFANT COAST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GUARD EXISTS CHIEFLY FOR MARINE SAFETY AND POLICE PURPOSES.) NEVERTHELESS, I DO CONSIDER THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF OUR ABILITY TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THIS GOB REQUEST WERE TO BE HAMPERED BY BUREAUCRATIC OR OTHER REASONS HAVING TO DO WITH LIMITATIONS ON OUR MILITARY SALES OR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. BEING AWARE OF THESE VARIOUS PROBLEMS, I PROMISED PM ONLY THAT I WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER. NEVERTHELESS, FOR REASONS SPECIFIED ABOVE, I WOULD HOPE THAT WE COULD GIVE PM AN EARLY, AND HOPEFULLY, POSI-

TIVE RESPONSE. THE REQUEST HAS MY PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION.  
TO THAT EXTENT, I WILL BE PREPARED TO FOLLOW-UP PERSONALLY WHILE  
IN US ON PERSONAL BUSINESS WEEK OF APRIL 21.  
BRITTON

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